

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 EA-11 ACDA-19 OMB-01 DRC-01 /148 W

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R 021315Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6067

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 4193

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TS UR MARR

SUBJECT: GOT WILL PERMIT MORE SOVIET SHIP VISITS

REF: TUNIS 4061, TUNIS A-013

1. FONMIN CHATTI TOLD ME JULY 1, IN REPLY TO DIRECT QUESTION, GTHAT GOT WILL GRANT APPROVAL FOR SOVIET NAVAL VISITS FROM TIME TO TIME. HE SAID USG SHOULD NOT ATTACH PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE TO GOT DECISION WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS REFLECTING REALITY OF GREAT POWER DETENTE TODAY. GOT COULD NO LONGER FIND A RATIONALE FOR RIGIDITY VERSUS THE SOVIET UNION. HE EMPHASIZED THAT DECISION DOES NOT REFLECT LESSENING OF GOT FRIENDSHIP FOR USG. THERE HAD BEEN NO REVOLUTION IN GOT FOREIGN POLICY BUT ONLY A "SLIGHT CHANGE IN MEANS OF SEEKING THE SAME GOALS".

2. CHATTI SAID HE WILL SHORTLY VISIT CHINA, THEN SOUTH KOREA (EMPHASIZING "SOUTH") AND JAPAN. HE CHUCKLED IN SAYING THAT TUNISIA ACCEPTS RUSSIAN SHIPS BUT KEEPS GOOD RELATIONS WITH CHINA. HE COMMENTED THAT IF TUNISIA
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IS SEEKING TO MAINTAIN AND "EQUILIBRE" IN ITS FOREIGN

RELATIONS, IT IS BETWEEN THE USSR AND CHINA. TUNISIA'S LONGSTANDING WARM RELATIONS WITH THE US ARE A "GIVEN", AND SOMETHING APART.

3. COMMENT: FONMIN HAS THUS CONFIRMED TO ME SUBSTANCE OF FRENCH AMBASSADOR'S REPORT ON TUNSIAN-SOVIET RELATIONS (TUNIS 4062). ALTHOUGH SAID AS AFTERTHOUGHT, CHATTI'S REFERENCE TO BALANCING ACT BETWEEN CHINA AND RUSSIA MAY VERY WELL REFLECT POLITICAL TRUTH. AT TIME OF PERMISSION FOR FIRST SOVIET NAVAL VISIT HERE, LAST MAY, BOUGUIBA VISIT TO PEKING WAS IMMINENT AND HE MAY HAVE FELT NEED REASSURE RUSSIANS.

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